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General and complete disarmament: follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament

Letter dated 1 October 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The States members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, established pursuant to article 7 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which created the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone, decided to issue, on 26 September 2014, a declaration on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, commemorated in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/32 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this declaration circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 96 (q).

(*Signed*) Xavier **Lasso Mendoza**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 1 October 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Declaration of the States members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The States members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), aware of our historic commitment to global nuclear disarmament,

Proud to belong to the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, the first densely populated area in the world to become a nuclear-weapon-free zone, by means of the Treaty of Tlatelolco,

Cognizant that we have served as a political, legal and institutional model for the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world,

Reiterating our full support for the declarations on nuclear disarmament adopted by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) on 20 August 2013, in Buenos Aires, and on 29 January 2014, in Havana,

Recognizing that the priority objective of achieving international peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity,

The States members of OPANAL:

Welcome and join in the commemoration, for the first time in history, on 26 September 2014, of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, established by United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/32;

Invite the international community to commemorate this International Day with different activities, in order to enhance public awareness, education and knowledge about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the absolute necessity of their prohibition and total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world;

On this occasion, we, the member States:

1. Reiterate our grave concern at the imminent threat posed by the ongoing existence of nuclear weapons and their potential use or threat of use, as well as the humanitarian impact of vast proportions and the global effects of any accidental or intentional nuclear detonation;

2. Affirm the pressing need to begin negotiations for the prompt conclusion of a universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and providing for their destruction in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner under a multilaterally agreed timetable, and our commitment to join forces to promote this priority objective;

3. Reiterate our call on all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their doctrines, security policies and military strategies, and to comply fully with their legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay;

4. Call on nuclear-weapon States to cease the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and the development of new types of nuclear weapons;

5. Urge, once again, the nuclear-weapon States that made interpretative declarations concerning the additional protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco to withdraw them without further delay, in order to give full security assurances to the States that comprise the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean;

6. Reaffirm the inalienable right of all States, in conformity with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination;

7. Urge nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to advance towards the complete elimination of those weapons, and urge them to continue to make progress in implementing the practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

8. Undertake to continue to implement nuclear disarmament education programmes, convinced that they are an effective means of contributing to the consolidation of international peace and security;

9. Shall continue to discuss and raise awareness of the multiple and catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any intentional or accidental nuclear detonation, and, in this regard, welcome the initiative of the Government of Austria to convene, in Vienna, the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, and urge all countries to participate and to continue to increase awareness of the terrible effects of nuclear weapons, based on the discussions of the two previous Conferences, held in Norway in 2013 and in Mexico in 2014;

10. Recall that the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 68/32, decided to convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made in this regard;

11. Reaffirm the historic declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace at the CELAC Summit held in Havana on 29 January 2014, at which the States of the region undertook to continue promoting nuclear disarmament as a priority objective and to contribute towards general and complete disarmament, in order to foster confidence-building among nations;

12. Stress our life commitment to present and future generations, guaranteeing the legacy of a nuclear-weapon-free world.